Amendments To The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

---

1. (currently amended) A method for rendering an image layer scene, comprising the steps of:

(a) defining a scene of image layer elements;

(b) rendering in a computer the elements of the image layer scene over a full black background to obtain ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full black;

(c) rendering in a computer the elements of the image layer scene over a full white background to obtain ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full white; and

(d) combining the ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full black with the ~~RGB~~ color components for each corresponding pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full white to form the rendered image layer scene.

2. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of combining the ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full black with the ~~RGB~~ color components for each corresponding pixel of the image layer scene rendered over full white includes the steps of, for each corresponding pixel of the image layer scenes rendered over full black and full white:

(a) determining an alpha value for the pixel as one plus the value of a single color component of the pixel from the image layer scene rendered over full black minus the value of the same color component of the corresponding pixel from the image layer scene rendered over full white;

(b) setting all of the ~~RGB~~ color component values of the pixel to zero if the alpha value for the pixel equals zero;

(c) otherwise setting the ~~RGB~~ color component values of the pixel to the corresponding color component values of the corresponding pixel from the image layer scene rendered over full black divided by the alpha value for the pixel.

3. (currently amended) The method of Claim 2 wherein the step of determining an alpha value for the pixel includes the step of determining the alpha value for the pixel as one plus the value of a red component of the pixel from the image layer scene rendered over full black minus the value of the red component of the corresponding pixel from the image layer scene rendered over full white.

4. (currently amended) A method for rendering a multi-layer image, comprising the steps of:

A2

(a) rendering a background image layer;

(b) saving the background image layer;

(c) creating a foreground image layer scene of foreground image layer elements;

(d) rendering in a computer the elements of the foreground image layer scene over a full black background to obtain ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black;

(e) rendering in a computer the elements of the foreground image layer scene over a full white background to obtain ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full white;

(f) combining the ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black with the ~~RGB~~ color components for each corresponding pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full white to form a rendered foreground image layer; and

(g) compositing the background image layer and the foreground image layer to form a multi-layer image.

5. (currently amended) The method of Claim 4 wherein the step of combining the ~~RGB~~ color components for each pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black with the ~~RGB~~ color components for each corresponding pixel of the foreground image layer scene rendered over full white includes the steps of, for each corresponding pixel of the foreground image layer scenes rendered over full black and full white:

(a) determining an alpha value for the pixel as one plus the value of a single color component of the pixel from the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black minus the value of the same color component of the corresponding pixel from the foreground image layer scene rendered over full white;

(b) setting all of the ~~RGB~~ color component values of the pixel to zero if the alpha value for the pixel equals zero;

(c) otherwise setting the ~~RGB~~ color component values of the pixel to the corresponding color component values of the corresponding pixel from the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black divided by the alpha value for the pixel.

6. (currently amended) The method of Claim 5 wherein the step of determining an alpha value for the pixel includes the step of determining the alpha value for the pixel as one plus the value of a red component of the pixel from the foreground image layer scene rendered over full black minus the value of the red component of the corresponding pixel from the foreground image layer scene rendered over full white.

7. (original) The method of Claim 4 comprising additionally the steps of providing a third image layer and compositing the background image layer, the foreground image layer, and the third image layer to form a multi-layer image with the third image layer appearing between the background image layer and the foreground image layer in the composited multi-layer image.

8. (original) The method of Claim 4 wherein the step of rendering a background image layer includes the step of rendering an RGB background image layer.

9. (new) The method of Claim 1 wherein the color components are RGB color components.

10. (new) The method of Claim 4 wherein the color components are RGB color components.